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Subject: Activities and Opinions of
Spanish IS Representative,
Marquis VILLALBA.

Place Acquired: Geneva

Evaluation: B-6

Report No. 1531487

Date of Info:

Date Acquired: April 1948

Date of Report: 12 Apr 1948

Source: Marquis VILLALBA, Spanish IS Representative in
Switzerland.

Route: F.B.W

1. Following is a translation of a report from Source based on his recent conversations with the Marquis VILLALBA, Spanish IS representative in Geneva.

2. "The ideas of the Marquis concerning the secret work of the Soviets in Switzerland are simplified enough. The only line which he is following is that of ZAIKOV-Boris BOROY and he does not know much more about it than we do. Aside from that he sees nothing. He admits his ignorance, however, and says that in Madrid, his superiors know absolutely nothing. He ties in the KEDIA case with the ZAIKOV line; he believes that KEDIA and BERIDEE are very dangerous for Spain. He has just returned from Madrid and while there he himself went to the Georgian restaurant "La Boite de Castillo"; the people in this establishment are strongly suspected of having belonged to the Gestapo. The Marquis' service, that is, the General Staff, asked the police to give them the dossiers of the people of the restaurant. The Marquis was accompanied to the place by one of his superiors. He related to me in a naive fashion that he found himself in a 'romantic atmosphere of espionage'. However, he said that it is quite difficult to take action against this restaurant because it is protected by Prince BAGRATION, husband of the Infanta Mercedes de Baviere. The family of the Infanta have very powerful relationships in Spain and Prince BAGRATION protects all White Russians in Spain. The Marquis believes that among the Russians there are probably a certain number of Soviet agents."

3. "The Marquis was amazed to find in the files of the Spanish IS very precise details on parachute training camps in the USSR, the more so since the members of his service have not even the most elementary knowledge of the geography of the USSR."

4. "The Marquis concluded that conversation with the remark that his service was absolutely lost and that the only possible thing was to reorganize it completely with the help of foreign specialists."

5. In a later conversation the Marquis VILLALBA pursued the subject of the ZAIKOV-Boris BOROY line:

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2.

"Through the Marquis VILLALBA we received some more information on the ZAIKOV-Boris POPOV line. According to the Marquis this line is directing its activity toward Spain; it passes through Perpignan, France, and ends in Madrid, via Barcelona, at "La Boite de Castillo". The "Boite de Castillo" is a restaurant founded in Madrid by a Georgian protégé of MEDA. The Prince BAGRATION, husband of the Infanta Mercedes de Saviere, has granted his protection to the restaurant which enjoyed in the beginning of its existence the protection of the Spanish Falange, which was closely compromised with the Gestapo. According to the Marquis, the ZAIKOV-B. POPOV line used the "Centrale Sanitaire Suisse" to communicate with Spain and perhaps with other countries. For Spain the following persons are involved: ESTIVALIS, René BERENGUER, and a certain Rodriguez LOPEZ. The latter came to Switzerland several times in 1947 in connection with "Centrale Sanitaire Suisse" activities. He apparently was involved as an accomplice in a criminal case in Geneva; he has frequent contacts with members of the International Brigade at Perpignan and Toulouse. The Marquis mentioned that no one named LOPEZ, or fitting his description or photo, is known to the Spanish police."

Field Comment: Source's comment that the Marquis de VILLALBA's concept of the Soviet IS is "simplified" and naive would seem to be justified. However, we have instructed Source to continue this contact in order to discover whether or not the Marquis has any grounds for his repeated statement that MEDA and BERIDES are connected with, as he terms it, the ZAIKOV-Boris POPOV line. Further information is being sent on MEDA's connection with the "Centrale Sanitaire Suisse".

Traces:

VILLALBA: MSBA-338, MSBA-537, MSB-1465

ZAIKOV: PIR-1686, PIR-2354, PIR-2057, MSB-1465, MSB-1355, BERN-792, WEL-2703, WEL-2463.

POPOV: MSB-1482, MSB-1355, MSBA-421, BERN-575.

ESTIVALIS: MSB-1465

BERENGUER: MSB-1465

BAGRATION, Prince: Probably identical with Prince Irakly BAGRATION-LOUKHIANOFF, listed as pretender to the Georgian throne in 1917-1840. Reported in Spain as chief of the Georgian Liberation Committee in JRI-3775.

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